

House Bill 939

By: Representatives Oliver of the 83<sup>rd</sup>, Benfield of the 85<sup>th</sup>, Ashe of the 56<sup>th</sup>, Porter of the 143<sup>rd</sup>, Smyre of the 132<sup>nd</sup>, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 1 of Chapter 1A of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
2 relating to general provisions relative to early care and learning, so as to establish a program  
3 to expand Georgia's Pre-K Program to three-year-olds; to provide for an annual report to the  
4 General Assembly; to provide for legislative intent with regard to funding the program; to  
5 establish a program to incentivize and acknowledge quality pre-k programs; to provide for  
6 an annual report to the General Assembly; to provide for legislative intent with regard to  
7 funding the program; to amend Code Section 50-27-3 of the Official Code of Georgia  
8 Annotated, relating to definitions relative to the lottery for education, so as to add a definition  
9 for the term "pre-kindergarten"; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws;  
10 and for other purposes.

11 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

12 **SECTION 1.**

13 Article 1 of Chapter 1A of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
14 general provisions relative to early care and learning, is amended by inserting new Code  
15 sections to read as follows:

16 "20-1A-18.

17 (a) No later than July 1, 2008, and subject to appropriations, the board shall establish a  
18 program to expand Georgia's Pre-K Program to children who attain the age of three by  
19 September 1. Such program shall provide services in a manner similar to those currently  
20 provided under such program, except as otherwise deemed age-appropriate by the  
21 department for three-year-old children and shall include an ongoing long-term method of  
22 longitudinal evaluation as conducted by the board. The board shall establish criteria for  
23 the selection of sites, which shall all be voluntary, and shall approve sites in accordance  
24 with such criteria.

25 (b) The board shall provide an annual report on the program established pursuant to this  
26 Code section to the General Assembly no later than December 1 following each fiscal year

1 in which funds are appropriated by the General Assembly to conduct such program and  
2 said report shall include, at a minimum, the method of evaluation as required in  
3 subsection (a) of this Code section.

4 (c) It is the intent of the General Assembly that the program established pursuant to this  
5 Code section be funded with lottery proceeds appropriated from the Lottery for Education  
6 Account.

7 20-1A-19.

8 (a) No later than July 1, 2008, and subject to appropriations, the board shall establish a  
9 program to acknowledge and support existing exemplary pre-k programs and to incentivize  
10 improvement in quality in underperforming pre-k programs. Such program shall be  
11 designed to provide grants in three tiers, as follows:

12 (1) Pre-k programs that have or receive accreditation by the National Association for the  
13 Education of Young Children;

14 (2) Pre-k programs that have received a Certificate of Distinction from the department;  
15 and

16 (3) Pre-k programs which are determined by the department to be in need of  
17 improvement in order to be an exemplary program.

18 The board shall develop criteria for the establishment of the program and for eligibility of  
19 pre-k programs which shall include an ongoing long-term method of longitudinal  
20 evaluation as conducted by the board.

21 (b) The board shall provide an annual report on the program established pursuant to this  
22 Code section to the General Assembly no later than December 1 following each fiscal year  
23 in which funds are appropriated by the General Assembly to conduct such program and  
24 said report shall include, at a minimum, the method of evaluation as required in  
25 subsection (a) of this Code section.

26 (c) It is the intent of the General Assembly that the program established pursuant to this  
27 Code section be funded with lottery proceeds appropriated from the Lottery for Education  
28 Account."

## 29 SECTION 2.

30 Code Section 50-27-3 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to definitions  
31 relative to the lottery for education, is amended by adding a new paragraph to read as  
32 follows:

33 "(17.1) 'Pre-kindergarten' means a class or program preceding kindergarten for children  
34 ages three years or older."

- 1
- SECTION 3.**
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- All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.